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**May 1, 2006**

PHD # 06-21



For release: May 2006

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****"May 21<sup>st</sup> –27<sup>th</sup> is National Dog Bite Prevention Week!"**

The San Bernardino County Animal Care & Control Program along with the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and the US Postal Service would like to remind everyone that May 21-27, 2006 is National Dog Bite Prevention Week! Each year about 4.7 million people in the US are bitten by dogs. Approximately 80% of those bites are by dogs we know and interact with on a regular basis. More than half of those victims are under the age of 13. Children are also at least three times more likely than adults to sustain a serious injury.

The following are some simple steps for children to take when interacting with dogs:

- Before petting a dog, always ask the dog's owner for permission.
- Never pet a dog that is eating, sleeping, or playing with a toy.
- Understand a dog's body language. For example, ears, tails, and fur standing straight up are some signs that a dog is angry and you should stay away from it!
- When you pet a dog, approach slowly and speak softly. Avoid direct eye contact with a dog. Let the dog sniff the back of your hand. Pet the dog on the back, not the head.
- If a dog growls at you or starts to chase you, stay still. Do not run or scream. A dog is more likely to sniff you and go away if you stay still and quiet.
- If a dog knocks you down to the ground, roll into a ball and stay still and quiet.
- Always tell an adult if you are hurt by a dog.

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For more information, please call the San Bernardino County Animal Care & Control Program toll free at 1-800-472-5609 or visit the Dog Bite Prevention Tips section on the Special Events/News Releases page of our website at [www.sbcounty.gov/acc](http://www.sbcounty.gov/acc). Thank you.

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